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Review of the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Identical letters dated 30 January 2004 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I am writing following the most recent horrific Palestinian terrorist attack perpetrated against the citizens of Israel.

Yesterday, 29 January 2004, at approximately 9 a.m. (local time), a Palestinian Authority policeman from Bethlehem perpetrated a grave suicide attack on a crowded commuter bus in central Jerusalem, killing 10 people and wounding over 50, 10 of them seriously. The bomb was packed with metal balls, nails and bolts into order to affect maximum pain and injury on the victims. The attack on public bus No. 19 occurred on the corner of Gaza and Arlozorov Streets, close to the official residence of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon in the suburban Rehavia neighbourhood. The powerful explosion ripped off one side of the bus and the back of the roof, lifting it 12 meters into the air, and blew out windows in the surrounding vicinity. Limbs and body parts of victims were strewn throughout the area of the blast, creating a scene of indescribable carnage and horror. The murdered were Avraham Balhasan, 28; Rose Boneh, 39; Chana Bunder, 38; Anat Darom, 23; Octavian Floresco, 42; Natalia Gamril, 53; Baruch Hondiashvili, 38; Dana Itach, 24; Eli Zfira, 48 — all of Jerusalem; and Yehezkel Goldberg, 41, of Betar Illit. The Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, of Yasser Arafat's own Fatah movement, proudly claimed responsibility for the attack, which was also welcomed by the terrorist organizations Islamic Jihad and Hizbullah. At the time of the bombing, Israeli Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz was meeting United States envoys David Satterfield and John Wolf to discuss measures to move the peace process forward.

Yesterday's attack proves yet again that the Palestinian leadership's legally and morally bankrupt strategy of brazen inaction and support for continued terrorist activity against innocent civilians remains unchanged. Israel is both outraged and deeply saddened by this horrific display of brutality and the continuing Palestinian violations of the most basic obligations of international law, human rights, Security

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Council resolutions, and the Road Map itself. The fact that a Palestinian Authority security official, charged with fighting Palestinian terrorism, was responsible for this brutal massacre only adds to that outrage. Unfortunately, this is far from the first time that security personnel on the Palestinian Authority payroll were directly engaged in terrorist atrocities. This repugnant disregard for life, and the officially sanctioned glorification of murder as martyrdom, is the greatest enemy of the Palestinian and Israeli peoples and of hopes of peace in the region.

In the absence of a concerted effort by the Palestinian Authority to fulfil its counter-terrorist obligations, Israel remains obligated to take the necessary defensive measures against the campaign of terrorism that was forced upon it. The death of so many innocent Israeli civilians demonstrates in the most gruesome way the urgent need for concerted actions to help thwart future attacks and the necessity of the anti-terrorist fence. Those who seek to draw a perverse moral equivalence between Israeli defensive measures targeting terrorist operatives that callously target and hide amongst civilians and the deliberate cold blooded murder of innocent men, women and children, reveal only the depths of their own depravity.

Israel calls upon the international community to make clear to the Palestinian leadership, and to those regimes sponsoring terrorism in the region, its absolute rejection of terrorist tactics and to accept nothing less than the complete dismantling of terrorist organizations and relentless efforts to prevent terrorism and bring its perpetrators and supporters to justice, in accordance with international law, the Road Map, signed agreements between the parties and Security Council resolutions, in particular resolution 1373 (2001). Only a united and uncompromising stand against the perpetrators of these crimes can bring an end to the Palestinian strategy of terrorism and murder and make peace between the peoples of the region possible. Rewards for the continuing Palestinian policy of intransigence and terror, in the form of political concessions or the toleration of one-sided initiatives in the organs of the United Nations, can only embolden the terrorists and undermine efforts aimed at achieving a peaceful negotiated settlement.

I submit this letter in follow-up to numerous letters detailing the campaign of Palestinian terrorism launched in September 2000, which document the crimes for which the terrorists and their supporters must be held fully accountable.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter circulated as a document of the fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly, under agenda items 156 and 67, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Dan **Gillerman**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations